

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7501

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 2784

LONDON FOR SEITZ

EO 11652 XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, PINT, EGEN, GH

SUB: US/UK TALKS ON CONDITIONS IN GHANA

REF: ACCRA 2630 (NOTAL)

1. A THIRD ROUND OF US/UK TALKS WAS HELD APRIL 14. MAIN POINTS.:

2. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS: HIGH COMMISSIONER MILLS REPORTED THAT GOG COMMISSIONER FOR ECONOMIC PLANNING GARDINER HAS REQUESTED TWO SCOTTISH ECONOMISTS BE SENT HERE TO RUN COURSES ON PROJECT APPRAISAL AND HELP GARDINER ADMINISTER ECONOMIC POLICIES. MILLS HAS STRONG RESERVATIONS ABOUT WISDOM OF IMPORTING WHITE UK EXPATS FOR THIS PURPOSE. VISION OF GHANA'S FRAGILE ECONOMY BEING HELD TOGETHER BY WHITE ASSISTANCE IS NOT AN ATTRACTIVE ONE. UK ALSO LACKS CONFIDENCE THAT EXPATS WOULD BE ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH MUCH GIVEN PRESENT CONDITIONS. MILLS BELIEVES (AS DO WE) THAT GARDINER WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PERSUADE ACHEAMPONG AND THE SMC TO FOLLOW RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ECONOMIC STABILIZATION.
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BRITISH THINK THAT INFLATION IS KEY ECONOMIC PROBLEM AT PRESENT. IT ARISES FROM GOVT'S PENCHANT FOR PRINTING CEDIS TO PAY FOR MOUNTING DEFICIT, A HABIT WHICH WILL BE HARD IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE TO BREAK.

3. POLITICAL CONDITIONS: BRITISH WERE IN GENERAL AGREEMENT WITH JUDGMENTS MADE IN PARM OVERVIEW (REFTEL) BUT ADDED THAT

IN THEIR VIEW A MAJOR STUMBLING BLOCK TO ECONOMIC PROGRESS IN GHANA IS NOT LACK OF TECHNOLOGY BUT RATHER LACK OF MANAGERIAL ABILITY. COUNTRY'S PROBLEMS, CAUSES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS ARE ALL WELL KNOWN TO ELITE HERE AND PRESUMABLY TO ACHEAMPONG AND SMC. HOWEVER, LITTLE IS BEING DONE TO AVERT ECONOMIC COLLAPSE. NEITHER WE NOR BRITISH HAVE ANY FIRM HYPOTHESES ON CULTURAL OR OTHER FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS SINGULAR IN-ACTION.

4. SOUTHERN AFRICA: BRITISH CONSIDER THAT GHANA GENUINELY FAVORS PEACEFUL TRANSFER OF POWER IN RHODESIA, WHILE URGING SHORTER TIME-FRAME THAN WEST APPARENTLY HAS IN MIND. TOGETHER WITH THE NIGERIANS, WITH WHOM THEY HAVE CLOSE TIES, GHANAIAAN OFFICIALS ARE ALSO GENUINELY CONCERNED ABOUT SOVIET ADVANCES IN AFRICA. ACHEAMPONG'S STRONG SUSPICIONS OF SOVIET INTENTIONS ARE NOT MERELY POSTURING FOR THE US BUT ARE HIS DEEPLY HELD OPINIONS. GOG IS WORRIED ABOUT INVASION OF ZAIRE, PERHAPS SEEING IT AS A HARBINGER OF FURTHER INCURSIONS ELSEWHERE ON THE CONTINENT. AMBASSADOR SMITH AND MILLS DISCUSSED FIVE POWER DEMARCHE ON NAMIBIA AND HOW BEST TO APPROACH GOG (SEPTEL.)

5. LOOKING AHEAD, TO A POST-ACHEAMPONG REGIME, BRITISH NOTED THAT FABIAN SOCIALISM IS DEEPLY EMBEDDED IN GHANA'S INTEL-LECTURALS AND THAT THIS MIGHT WELL GIVE A NEW REGIME A TILT TOWARD THE LEFT. WHILE AGREEING, WE WOULD ADD THAT THIS WOULD PROBABLY NOT DISTURB GHANA'S BASICALLY MODERATE AND PRO-WEST ORIENTATION.

SMITH
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